

THE TALON



PANIC

High Tuition Should Open Dialogue

Dear Editor-
I wanted to comment on the story about Avila on KMBC channel 9. I believe that we pay enough money at this school as students, that the topics we are interested in should be covered in the Talon. It seems that the position of the school is that they would rather the students be uninformed about controversial topics such as sex. This is a realistic issue that should be addressed. One of the Avila values is “Commitment to the continual growth of the whole person.” The administrators refuse to allow the growth of the whole person because they are ignoring a part of it. One obstacle that stands in the way of Avila’s free speech is our very conservative bishop. It is a possibility that our Catholic identity could be pulled if we allowed this publication to remain on campus. Thank you for covering this story. Sincerely,
Dani Asher

Pulled For Good Reason

Dear Editor,
The issue of The Talon that was pulled off the shelves recently was pulled for a good reason. I believe that the articles published had no need to be published, and all that was trying to be attempted was just to get a negative reaction out of most of the school. I am not just referring to the student’s side; I am referring to staff and faculty side as well. I believe that this issue had good articles in it, except for the “Midtown Party Equation”. The article was merely a students rambling about how one night stand happen, and if you want them to happen, how that student does it. There is absolutely no need for the spread of that kind of thought. If that is the type of voice you want to have The Talon to have, then it is very disappointing to spread a typical teen stereotype around. All in all, I think you should think more about the outcomes of a Talon story before it is printed for an audience to read. Thank you for your time. Sincerely,
Cody Wasson

The choice of color combination on page 12 of The Talon for the AIDA advertising is very blurry. The colors are all the same and it is not catchy.
Reginald King’s idea of the 11th commandment is the most fitting because negativity plays a very important role in our lives. Being negative brings about the worst part of a person. There is also a good feeling when we think positive and are around positive things, which brings out the best in us.
Thank you for considering my contributions.

Give Us Some Breathing Room

Dear Editor,
I believe in being well informed on what is going on around me. If I am paying so much tuition I expect the school to have a special interest in me and what I have to say.



As a religious and private school, officials should be more lenient to students and able to communicate their views as well as giving us some breathing space, America believes in freedom of speech, what happened to that?
What are the values of Avila if the students can not make their own decisions or publish anything that will be educative and make others aware of what goes on around us. If the officials did not like what was published that should have given them anidea of what type of students attend Avila and TRY to make positive changes instead of confisticating all schools newspaper and making matters worst.

Sex is one the many issues affecting the world today, so why would a religious school not allow publications on sexual issues and use that as a research to communicate to students or a beginning of better counseling.
Eudora Savage

Town Stereotypes

Dear Mr. Thorman,
I just currently read the article in today’s Talon, “The Midtown Party Equation”. I found that this article is extremely encouraging stereotypical men behavior and insulting. This is just another example on how typical college students tend to act. You basically just told the readers that its only normal to have one night stands, and sleep with friends. Simple statements like “In your twenties, one night stands are bound to happen”, and “In my opinion, the best way to con a friend into sleeping with you just might involve body shots, skinny dipping, and dirty dancing.” What kind of friend are you?
This article should not have even been put into the paper. It tells one side of a “typical” mans story on how to get laid at a party, and, in your words, “con” a “friend” into having a one night stand with you.
One last thing that i noticed was your attitude during this entire article. It starts off sounding like you are against “one night stands”, and you are encouraging to think about “repercussions”. Then you go and blow your total credibility with this story by telling the reader how you, by personal experience, were able to “con” your friend.
Aside from the total lack of consideration for others morals, this paper was well worded. Just think about the majority of your audience next time. Not the “twenty percent”. Also, quote sources so that they may be checked. Thank you for your time, and keep in mind this is only a response to the article, not you as a person.
Cody Wasson

Kim Smitka’s note* George Thorman is indeed a woman.

Music Needs Attention

Erin Stewart,
I wanted to take a moment to address your article “Shows Liven Up Local Scene.” It is great to see that someone has taken an interest in bringing greater attention to the local music scene here in Kansas City. However, I feel that a much greater article could have been written in promotion of the few local venues whom book shows which cost nothing to enter and are open to those of all ages. Venues such as “the Crave” a locally owned coffee house on 39th St. in Westport often offers free performances from local artists who can in turn make money through the sale of cd’s and merchandise. I myself in fact have booked many talented bands under the moniker “the second floor.” These bands have played at both of my second floor apartments, I have never had a band refuse to play without pay, in fact most embrace the opportunity to play for the large crowds my shows tend to draw, 75+ at the

last one. The success of these shows is based on an allowance for all ages to attend, at no charge and through extensive advertisment on myspace and with flyers. Like at “the Crave” bands can bring cds and merch to sell to people at my shows, and often bring in a pretty fair amount of money in doing so.
My point is that those who wish to attend local shows and the venues that provide that opportunity to people of all ages, even those who cannot afford to pay, would benefit far more from an informative article about said venues, than a venue such as the Grand Emporium who restrict their shows to 21 and over at a charge of \$5. Sincerely,
Rob Masters

Slavery Still Hot Issue

Max Thompson:
I really liked your article about how we should not compare everyday nuances to slavery. As an African American, I appreciate others who can relate. Yes, there were many African Americans who understood what Senator Hilary Clinton was saying, but slavery is incomparable. I think she was trying to find common ground with her audience when she made her statement, but she did not have to go as far as comparing the running of the House of Representatives like a plantation. I agree with you whole heartedly and wish others could realize this also. In no ways am I trying to stick up for President Bush, but I get fed up with people feeling like the only way they can relate to the African American population is by talking about slavery. Let’s talk about politics in general, or religion, or how African Americans are viewed in the public. We can relate to things than just slavery. I know that some of the topics that we can relate to are going to be controversial, but I totally agree that slavery should not be a focal point. Thanks for your time!
Regards,
Brittany Harris

News of Interest

To whom it may concern,
I am writing concerning the information about the Eagle Talon and its involvement to the Kansas City News; I feel that the information that was pertained in the copies of the Talon gave the majority of the readers something to be interested in. Even though the story may have been a little edgy, it is what modern readers would be concerned with on campus, students do not want to read about boring, dull material; they want to hear stories that involve themselves. Sincerely,
Eric King

Colorado Sunshine

Dear fellow staff writer, Emily Haskins,
I was dropping a few lines to let you know that I really appreciated the quality of your article. Not only did you enlighten me to the fact that Colorado, my place of birth, was legalizing marijuana, you also set an example of how a great article should be composed. I am sure that you sparked a lot of interest with this subject matter mainly because, let’s face it, marijuana is one of many of America’s dirty little secrets and this issue will definitely be setting a precedence for a lot of states to come so it may effect us sooner than later, I must also say that I was impressed by your obedience of Professor Snorgrass’s teachings as far as attributions and your use of using reliable sources. I enjoyed the notes you included such as the mention of voting&nbs p;to lower the age for possession in Telluride the ski resort town, this show’s that sterotyping and social class has little to do with the issue. I would just like to salute you for such a well put together article that I can enjoy and use as an outline for my upcoming news stories Sincerely,
Regina Jones

To the Talon Editor:
I think those articles were good. This is something that people go through all the time and everyone talks about it. These articles would be very helpful to freshmen students who our away at college and surrounded by peer pressure or if they think about sex. America has always talked about free speech but were never given that opportunity because there being punished. They should take this out the constitution because people don’t know how to accept others opinion without feeling there’s will be altered. I don’t see how if your belief is strong.

Standards or Censorship

Emotive language conveys the literal meaning of words, but more importantly, it conveys the emotive meaning; the undertones or overtones of the emotions connected with the words. The word ‘standard’ has positive emotive meanings. It connotes excellence or a model toward which one strives. The word ‘censorship’, has a negative emotive meaning, the judgment of failing to meet a standard of behavior or morals. From whence comes this difference?

On page 1133 in Webster’s *New Collegiate Dictionary* the following meanings are given to the words ‘standard.’

1. ‘standard’ n: 3: “something established by authority, custom, or general consent as a model
or example: CRITERION

4: something set up and established by authority as a rule for the measure of quantity, weight, extent, value, or quality

Syn STANDARD, CRITERION, GAUGE, YARDSTICK, TOUCHSTONE *shared meaning element:* a means of determining what a thing should be

‘standard’ adj 1a: constituting or conforming to a standard esp. as established by law or custom

3: having recognized and permanent value a --- reference work

In most areas, such as, philosophy, athletics, and business, standards are set and those in these fields strive to meet them. To be published in a philosophy journal, the work must be quality, that is, meet the standards. In athletics, a certain quality of performance is demanded to keep one’s position. And in the business world, standards are, likewise, set to measure performance. If one fails to meet the standards for publication, the person is not published. If an athlete’s performance fails to meet expectations (standards), he/she may be released from the team. If a business fails to meet the budget, its workers suffer. **In these and most other areas, value judgments are made regarding the quality of performance.** To be denied publication, an athletic position, or a raise is to be **judged lacking in the necessary qualities. A negative judgment is made: the standards**

were not met. Nonetheless, ‘standard’ retains a positive emotive meaning. Those responsible for upholding the standards are looked upon in a positive way.

On page 180 of Webster’s *New Collegiate Dictionary* ‘censor’, ‘censorship’, ‘censors’, and ‘censure’ are defined as such:

2. ‘Censor’ n 2: one who supervises conduct and morals: as **a:** an official who examines publications or films for objectionable matter

‘censor’ vt to subject to censorship
‘censorship’ n a: the institution, system, or practice of censoring **b the actions or practices of censors; esp:** censorial control exercised repressively

‘censure’ n 1: a judgment involving condemnation **3:** the act of blaming or condemning sternly **4**
an official reprimand

‘censure’ vt 1: obs: ESTIMATE, JUDGE **2: to find fault with and criticize as blameworthy syn** CRITICIZE” (Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, 1133, 180)

Society sets certain moral standards for the sake and safety of its citizens. Organizations and religions, likewise, set standards of moral behavior for their groups or members. However, when society, an organization or a religion **makes a value judgment with regard to the quality of certain behaviors, that these actions fail to meet the criteria or standard,** the person, who is criticized, objects to ‘censorship’ by the society, the organization or the religion. A negative connotation is given to the word, ‘censorship.’ Somehow, fault is found with those responsible for applying the moral standards and not with the person failing to live up to the standard.

Why do **standards of excellence,** which measure quality of performance, have positive emotive meanings and **censorship,** which also measures quality of performance, have negative emotive meanings? In both cases standards are applied and in both cases value judgments are made. From whence comes this difference?

Haste Makes Waste

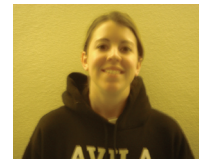
Dear Talon,

I feel that the problem with the removal of the Talon, was a hast reaction. By that I mean because the faculty of Avila is aware that not all of their students are catholic originated. So they must already know that the most of the students attending Avila University do not follow the catholic religion beliefs. Although there are more sides to the story, but they have not considered what the publication may have meant to the students.

The faculty should also consider that the students here came here by choice but on the other hand we are all human and we all have the right to freedom of speech. They gave us the right to publish what we want but what we as students want is more than just boring things. The Talon should be full of useful info and even if they would prefer to act as though young adults in college are not having safe or unsafe sex. That would be living under a rock or just in denial.

So thanks for taking the time to listen to my opinions.

Accidents Happen



Dear Talon,

Ms. Hoskins wrote the article entitled, “Denver May Go Up in Smoke” regarding the law that recently passed in Denver to allow the possession of marijuana. This article was clever in that it presented the information about how Denver was educated on the less harmful effects of marijuana in comparison to alcohol. It goes on to say that “the legalization of marijuana will reduce the use of alcohol, which leads to higher rates of car accidents.” On the other hand, this article failed to mention that it was still illegal to smoke marijuana in Denver. The last thought in the article states that “the Mile High City just might get a little higher” and this implies that it is indeed legal to smoke it. Though the article was interesting because it related information about this new law which is the first of its kind, it was also misleading due to lack of information. Thanks for your time.

Dani Asher

Student Politics Will They Hear Us Now?

Volume 4 Issue XIV of Avila’s campus magazine the Talon, titled ‘Unzipped’ caused much ado with campus administration. Subjects such as contraceptives, sex scandal, and drugs were a few of the enlightening issues that the student’s composed for this particular issue which also happened to picture a open ‘fly’ on the cover. These were the interests and voices of the students which were muffled once staff decided to remove the February issue from campus newsstands.

Understandably, the Catholic institution is on pins and needles whether or not to continue even printing the student run publication. Ben Digman, editor of The Talon was quoted during an interview

Good or Bad?



Editor:

I am unsure if going to the local news was a good idea, it was not a bad one though. I understand as much publicity as possible is best. That way the people who pulled the paper will feel they are being unreasonable. By sharing this story it is bringing unwanted negative attention to the University. If that is what you are trying to do then it is very smart. The university wants positive attention not negative. But either way the University is being recognized and attention is being drawn.

Amy Schwarz

Thank You Talon

I was dropping a few lines to thank you for allowing our students voice to be heard. As you see this is not something that is typically practiced on campus. The latest issue of Avila’s Talon which was pulled was actually the most interesting, where usually the Talon gives movie reviews, short stories or what I would call “fillers” meaning that the majority of the issues at hand were of little or no interest not to mention repeats from previous issues. Then once we finally can relate and actually increase readership of the Talon its labeled controversial. Yeah God forbid we need to be aware of contraceptives, one night stands and etc as college students. I would just like to thank you once again for addressing an issue which is discreetly causing controversy within the Avila community. Now our cries will be heard, since after all KMBC isn’t a Catholic based news station, or even if it were, I’m sure that there would be a few viewers who practice some other faith.

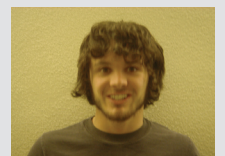
Dear Ms. Jungman,

These two stories are very important subjects that all young adults should read. I feel that having control on your hormones is something a lot of people, not just young adults, have a problem with.

On the other hand I do feel that the story Control yourself should have not followed Health Library. I believe your story has good information in it and it would have more substance to it, if the follow up was the Health Library. I feel that your story is telling your readers that things they can do to not get a STD. And in your story you are advising them to tell their mates, although they do not always have enough courage to tell their mates that they have a STD. The Health Library would help them tell their mate and how tips on what the mate should do while the infected mate is confessing.

Thank you for listening to my feedback. Jasmine Williams

Talon Gets Relevant



Dear Editor,

It’s great to see that “the Talon” is finally printing the sort of stories that the Avila student body is interested in reading and, from what I gather, the sort of stories the staff wishes to write. While it is unfortunate that the last issue was pulled from the stands, it does provide a certain level of publicity, and as you well know, any publicity is good publicity. I agree with the theory of not writing a “watered down” publication however I would much prefer to see “the Talon” continue to publish “controversial” stories that push the limits and exercise the right of free speech.

Thank you,
Rob Masters

Brainless Sex

I am finding it hard to come to the defense of faulty journalism, which is what I think the most recent Talon issue was. I can guess how it began. A wire service for student newspapers provided excellent information on STDs, and the Talon sought to give the wire material a local foundation. I think Lauren McCarthy's purpose was to determine whether STDs are really an issue at Avila. But, whatever her purpose was, it was not made clear in the article, which comes across to me as a celebration of brainless sex. For balance, I would like a discussion by students of the negative consequences of casual sex, or comments from students who practice abstinence--a growing population, from what I understand. If the Talon could not find any abstinent students at Avila, we need to know that too.

Below McCarthy's article appeared a piece by George Thorman that I thought was a satire of date rape. Unfortunately, the piece was not identified as satire or placed on the op-ed pages as opinion. Date rape is certainly a problem at Avila. While Thorman's piece deftly skewered the practice, placing the essay on a news page made it seem to be a "How To" manual for rapists and an endorsement of acquaintance rape. The cover art, together with the burying on page 17 of "real" news of President Gordon's resignation, makes me believe that this issue aimed for sexual

titillation to boost readership instead of a sober discussion of sexuality at Avila.

I would like to believe that the Talon's readers are too smart to mistake satire for reportage, but, as a feminist scholar, I believe that media messages are powerful. They delude and shape the thinking of even intelligent people and thus can do much harm. The administration was hasty in pulling the Talon from distribution. After all, this is a liberal arts institution that supposedly cherishes the free exchange of ideas, even poorly expressed ones. Yet our free speech rights are not unqualified. Like most communitarians, I assert that my right to say anything I want to say is not an entitlement. It does not entitle me to say things that cause pain to other members of my community, to represent an institution while flouting its values, or to market sexuality. Holding me to those responsibilities is not censorship but an assertion of the community's rightful claims on me. And so I hope that, in future, the Talon will produce more thoughtful, balanced, and grammatical issues and that the administration will leave them on the racks long enough for us to weigh their strengths and weaknesses.

Dr. Sherry Schirmer
Associate Professor of History
816-501-3645
O'Rielly, Social Sciences Office G

Students Need Voice

Obviously the voice of the students within Avila University has been destroyed. Personally I do agree with all said and conveyed on the news with you; the magazine shouldn't be pulled or controlled, but this is a private organization and all rights are given up when we attend this salaciously deprived school. Although this is the place that time seems to have forgotten and the people in charge are stuck in the 20's, these people are still in charge and control all aspects of campus life. There are ways around this problem, but to what extent is everyone willing to

go? The big problem I believe the faculty is facing is the Bishop taking funding away from the school because of lost Catholic belief. If anyone who has attended Avila for a number of years should know, the new Bishop is an outlandishly conservative person who doesn't even believe women and men are equal. My question is why a person with those apparently "traditional" beliefs would ever allow such things as pre-marital sex on a college campus stand and be written about?

Just Wondering.

What is the Talon's Mission

This letter is not written to address the issue of the removal of the last edition of the Talon from the newsstands. The Supreme Court recently upheld the right of universities to exercise control over university sponsored papers.

Whenever controversial material is used in a school setting, there should be defensible reasons for its use. Does the Talon have a well defined mission and purpose for its publication? Are articles and editorials chosen that reflect high standards and well articulated values? Are students educated to work within these procedures? Is there editorial oversight by a faculty sponsor or student-run editorial board? When such policies are in place, it is much easier to select among the content submitted and much easier to defend the choices.

I like to think that a newspaper sponsored by Avila University would be discussing issues and providing materials that generate critical thought, meaningful

discussion and reasoned dialogue. I would hope we would have a little "sophistication" as a newspaper. That certainly does not mean that controversy should or would be avoided. Controversy can help facilitate thinking and conversation. However, when material is chosen for inclusion, I would hope it meets high journalistic standards in both content and format. If challenged, I would hope that the defense of that article would be easily given because of procedures already in place.

So I would ask if the articles in question met a set of standards in place at the Talon. Did the articles have values that aligned with the newspaper's standards? Did the articles have controversy that was worthy of inclusion or just controversy for its own sake? Did they belong in a paper sponsored by Avila University?

Sincerely,
Dr. Laura Sloan
Dean,
School of Education

Talon Full of Energy

I have been teaching at Avila for thirteen years as a Professor of writing, literature, and Women's Studies. When I finally located a copy of the last issue of the *Talon*, I sat down and read it from beginning to end. I was impressed with the overall energy and effort of the issue. I was especially impressed by the obvious effort made to capture a diversity of perspectives. The twenty pages of news articles, commentary, cartoons, and photos clearly represented a lot of student work.

In this issue I saw students expressing their voices and experiences, talking about significant issues, and initiating a new atmosphere of openness and free speech on campus. Why would anyone censor that? According to the Avila Mission Statement,

we value "Diversity and its expression," and thus such censorship violates the very cornerstone of our purpose and goals.

Avila is supposedly a university, and that means that students should have the space to experiment and express themselves honestly and openly. That's where the dialogue begins, and we all benefit from the dialogue, not the silencing of these voices. Rather than a culture of fear and repression, as university educators we have a responsibility to foster an atmosphere of creativity, experimentation, and expression.

Nancy Cervetti
Professor & Chair of English

Talon Finds Voice

Dear Editor,

I am ecstatic that the talon is finally "finding its voice." It seems that they have just been writing feel good stories and stories that they don't care about for a while now. I am glad that it found something that it has passion for. I personally didn't think that the articles in last month's issue, that caused so much controversy, were worth publishing in the first place. I also would like to give a piece of advice to whoever called KMBC News to cover the controversy. I don't know if you have ever heard this, but every action has an equal and opposite reaction, so it might be nice to think about the repercussions before jumping into attention grabbing. Incase you were unaware Avila is on a grant from a company to build new dorms, this

company doesn't like it when universities go through "transitional phases," which we currently are since Tom Gordon resigned, so we are already treading on loose soil, but then you add all this negative publicity and "controversy" and it doesn't shed a very good light on Avila. This company can pull our grant whenever they want. So thank you for putting that in Jeopardy. Also, Avila doesn't get that much news coverage as it is and this is one of the biggest stories Avila has gotten covered, and it is such bad publicity for not only the school, but for the communications department too.

Sincerely,
Brittyn Reid

P.S. This is not a personal attack on anyone, it is just my thoughts.

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our lives. Being negative brings about the worst part of a person. There is also a good feeling when we think positive and are around positive things, which brings out the best in us.

Thank you for considering my contributions.



Dr. Laura Sloan

The Taming Of Free Speech On America's Campuses

By Greg Lukianoff
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education
(KRT)

For those who still believe that America's colleges and universities treasure free speech, I would like to introduce Texas Tech University's "free speech gazebo." The gazebo is only 20 feet in diameter, but, up until this summer, it was the sole area on campus where students could engage in free speech activities—such as demonstrations, speeches, and pamphleteering—without giving the university six days advance notice.

I asked one of my friends — who has a math degree from MIT — how tightly one would have to pack Texas Tech's 28,000 students in order to fit them all in the gazebo. He deduced that, if all of Texas Tech's students wanted to exercise their free speech rights at once, they would have to be squished to about the density of Uranium 238.

Unsatisfied with 280 square feet of freedom, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) and the Alliance Defense Fund launched a legal challenge to Tech's speech policies last June, as part of FIRE's assault on speech codes

nationwide. In response to the lawsuit, the university added additional, larger free speech zones. However, the policy, as sent to students on July 7, now bans any speech that might "cause reasonable apprehension" of "psychological harm" if it is expressed with the intent of "humiliating, demeaning or degrading any member of the University community." As the new student group, Students for Free Speech, (which FIRE has also been working with over the past months) recognizes this broad and vague policy is almost certainly unconstitutional at a public university like Texas Tech and could be used to ban anything from pro-life protests, to anti-Bush activism, to virtually any form of satire or parody.

By merely expanding their speech zones and then adding a ban on protected speech to its policy, Texas Tech seems to be saying that it will fight for every inch of repression of free speech that it is allowed under the law. This is no way for an institution ostensibly devoted to free inquiry to behave. Furthermore, speech codes that ban "offensive" speech and speech zone policies that turn most of the campus into censorship zones teach students that free speech is at best a joke and at worst a menace.

The phenomenon of "free speech areas" perhaps best represents the attitude toward free speech on many campuses today: Free expression will be tolerated, but grudgingly, and only when it is agreeable, tightly controlled, and strictly regulated. These tiny, restrictive censorship zones exist or have existed at dozens, possibly hundreds of institutions—such as Western Illinois University, West Virginia University, University of Nebraska at Omaha, University of Houston, University of Alabama, and the University of Northern Texas, just to name a few.

With so many schools showing such hostility to expression, where are students supposed to learn to value freedom of speech? They won't learn it in their classes where The New York Times reports students are increasingly reticent to express their opinions in class, and they won't learn it through their student activities, which are tightly regulated and controlled. They are even unlikely to learn respect for free speech from their fellow students, as demonstrated by the continuing problem of students stealing and destroying newspapers to repress viewpoints that they dislike (a common occurrence, well-

documented by both FIRE and the Student Press Law Center).

If this kind of mob censorship represents this generation's attitude towards free speech, then we should all be worried.

The solution to the problem of repressive campuses and censorship-happy students is complex and involves more than just defeating speech codes, eliminating censorship zones, and reinvigorating academic freedom. For the sake of future generations, we must educate the current generation about the value of free speech, not just about its perceived "downside." People who believe in free speech and uninhibited debate on campus must stop feeling that they need to apologize for those beliefs. The messy, loud, chaotic, and, yes, sometimes offensive nature of a college campus that embraces free speech should not be feared. Rather, it should be celebrated as proof of the diversity, passion, and remarkable vitality of our society.

Greg Lukianoff is an attorney and the director of legal and public advocacy for the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE). He can be reached greg@thefire.org.

Free Press 101

By Erich Wasserman
Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service
(KRT)

The recent seizure of an entire press run of the student newspaper, the Hampton Script, by Hampton University administrators is the latest in a sad history of censorship, and now even theft, of student publications by administrators on college and university campuses across the country.

At Hampton, acting President JoAnn Haysbert ordered an entire press run confiscated. What had the students done to provoke such a reprisal? Had they published hard-core pornography or incited riots by printing demonstrable falsehoods? No, they had merely done their job by reporting on hundreds of health code violations in the university's cafeterias.

Administrators seized the newspapers after the paper's student editors refused to succumb to President Haysbert's demand that her letter of explanation for the violations run on the front page. They instead slated it to run on page three in accordance with the newspaper's standard practice for handling letters-to-the-editor.

Hampton University is a private institution and thus is not bound to uphold the First Amendment's guarantees of free speech or a free press. Most liberal arts institutions, however, honor these freedoms, because in our free society virtually all liberal arts

colleges proclaim the value of academic freedom and freedom of speech.

Sadly, Hampton's administration is far from alone in censoring free expression on campus. Nationally, there is a broad campus assault on those civil liberties that are respected in nearly every other venue of our society. America's campus publications, often the training grounds for professional journalists, are routinely targeted when their content offends administrators.

In January 2003, editors of an Illinois student newspaper, The Innovator, sued Governors State University in University Park after administrators, upset by content critical of the university, halted publication and demanded to review all future issues before publication. This happened despite constitutional protections from such prior restraint censorship — GSU being a public institution — and despite GSU's own policies granting students the authority to "determine content and format ... without censorship or advance approval." The GSU student journalists, like those at Hampton, had published stories about genuine campus issues, such as grade inflation and lavish administrative spending. The GSU case remains before the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals.

In October 2001, administrators at Tufts University threatened its student journal, The Primary Source, with defunding and dissolution after a sexual harassment

complaint over a cartoon and written parody. A student group leader claimed that the journal's parodic content had made her into a "sex object" after it mentioned her organization's "tight ... tank-tops" along with a cartoon of a woman dressed in tight clothing with the organization's logo. Tufts backed down only when faced with public exposure and pressure.

At the University of California-San Diego in February 2002, a satirical student newspaper, The Koala, was nearly disbanded for poking fun at one of the campus's more outspoken student leaders. Administrators responded to complaints from the offended student by holding a secret trial aimed to shut down the publication altogether.

What is occurring on America's campuses is evidence of a profound misunderstanding of the concept of free expression by the same generation that prided itself on kindling the free speech and civil rights movements during its own spirited youth. Administrators believe they have the right and obligation to censor, very selectively, thoughts and ideas that make them or others uncomfortable, thus encouraging students to answer speech they disagree with not with opposing speech but rather with censorship and campus disciplinary charges. And what's the lesson in that?

At Hampton University, a historically black institution, students have

compromised. Given Editor Talia Buford's public statements ("I've cried more in three days than I have in two years") and other students on record as fearing suspension or expulsion for their public defense of free speech, it should come as no surprise that the students caved in to what can only be called prior restraint censorship: the students published President Haysbert's letter on the front page of their newspaper.

In what is a hopeful sign that the larger society will not tolerate such tyranny on our campuses, the American Society of Newspaper Editors announced last week that it would withhold a \$55,000 grant intended for Hampton's Journalism School.

State universities are bound to respect Constitutional freedoms, and those private universities that revere academic freedom should do no less. Freedom of expression isn't something to be granted or withheld depending on the convenience and sensibilities of academic bureaucrats; that's why it is a cherished principle. Freedom is not negotiable.

Erich Wasserman is the executive director of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE), a nonprofit educational foundation based in Philadelphia.

Dissonance is Good, but Discourse is Better For the Talon

An Open Letter
J. Anthony Snorgrass
Talon Adviser

I have come to appreciate that at the seat of most conflict is a ‘crash’ of visions, an absence of constructive dialogue about the differences that seed our beliefs and values, and far too often an unwillingness to foster the requisite and essential channels for clear and unfiltered communication. Now many would consider this a ‘clash’ rather than a ‘crash’ but as a tribute to the Academy Awards’ (and my pick) for best movie of the year, I’ve committed to using the word crash as a noun, verb, and adjective as much as possible over the next few months to call attention to the many social issues the film brought to our doorsteps. But to the point, Crash the film shined a bright spot light upon the ubiquitous failed communications and human fragilities that stifle constructive communication which most often requires that we confront, face and shore-up the overt and subtle weaknesses of our arguments while directly facing others which is certain to present a degree of mental, emotional, and in some, physiological discomfort. Most of us prefer the opportunity to retreat and regroup rather than deal spontaneously in face-to-face discussions. This is why the press conference has become the preferred communication in policy circles. Of course, we unwittingly think that we clearly communicate our positions as we have either published them or even presented them over and over again in varying environments and before a plethora of audiences. But these situations represent only the proclamation phase of communication and discount the glaring possibility of misinterpretation, misunderstanding, or out-right disagreement. When left on their own, all three of these conditions can be counter-productive as they leave to others the dubious challenge to clarify, conjure meaning, and interpret language as well as intentions.

This dynamic has been rumbling underneath the Talon operations for quite some time. I observed this especially during my initial forays with the previous Talon editors. They all felt that I was a bit heavy handed as an adviser in pushing for changes as well as for broader campus (faculty, staff and student) participation. The February Issue of the Talon merely gave rise for the vocalization of these sentiments, once again. So far, I have catalogued at least three (3) different and equally worthy visions of what this publication is and what it is to become. Students, for the most part, view the publication as a completely “student-run, student-oriented, and student produced” publication and as such is the forum for the expression of the student’s voices as diverse and dynamic as they may be. The University, which provides the lion’s share of the financial underwriting for the publication, not surprisingly, views the publication as a University-sponsored publication and as such should reflect the values of the Avila community as compiled in the University Mission and Values statements. Yet another view is that the Talon is purely an academic endeavor which is intrinsically tied to the academic curriculum as a product of the journalism oriented course offerings. Still another, and one which reflects much of my thinking to this point, places a strong emphasis on the alternative and artistic viewpoints, in that the Talon both in content and in form represents the opportunity to in a ‘real-world educational experience’ explore and push the boundaries of journalism, design, and critical thought through humor, satire and youthful irreverence.

While, the Talon’s continued viability as a printed news magazine is threatened by the tidal wave of global media convergence, the push towards electronic and self-published news (see KC Star article Deal Fuels Debate on Future of Print, 3/14/06, www.kansascity.com), and the ubiquitous

(almost immediate) nature of today’s news reporting, an even larger challenge for the Talon is garnering reader relevance and adequate staffing. The current editors of the Talon have attempted to address relevance by shifting the content to reflect student, faculty, and staff commentary with a compliment of wire and news-service pulls. This has been the formula for most recent Talon issues. Some would argue that this format has certainly lifted reader interest. But, the down-side is that positions stated in the student commentary may not always be universally shared and their very expression could of course lead to considerable discomfort and even disdain within the very readership it is trying to build. Indeed, this is a difficult balancing act for any publication. While I believe that a writer has a right to free expression of their ideas and also believe that a publication has a right to publish those works as submitted, I do respectfully recognize the right of the University (and other distribution venues) to deny distribution privileges and to patrol for circulation of publications it deems inappropriate. Of course, not one of these positions when exercised is immune from anticipated and unanticipated consequences. As acrobatic as it may appear, I can comfortably straddle all these fences because this is not simply a two-sided, one-size fits all, one winner (or loser) issue. (I guess I should mention that while Crash was my sentimental favorite for best picture, Good Night and Good Luck was my sleeper choice primarily because of its journalistic and free speech undertones).

None of the aforementioned alternatives, however, fully acknowledges the essential and mostly-volunteer nature of the Talon and this is what will ultimately define the publication in its print and electronic forms. As with most branding strategies, it is necessary to constantly refresh a product as an extension of its intended

audience. As such, the future of the Talon rests with its ability to actively engage spirited cross campus participation in the content development, writing, publication, business management, design, advertising, and distribution. Many universities have encouraged their units to submit press-releases and ‘ready for publication stories’ to address these limitations. Many others without and even some with journalism programs have begun to pay students to write, edit, design, and layout publications in order to assure a constant flow of quality stories and publishable material because the reliance on journalism and writing courses to produce content has proven sporadic and often unreliable in supplying publication requirements.

The Talon team, University Officials, students, and concerned faculty must work together to resolve this crash of visions in a manner that does not kill the spirit and essence of the Talon. Since assuming the reigns as Talon adviser, I have relied upon the College Media Adviser’s Code of Ethical Behavior as a personal and professional guidepost. I am providing a copy of it in the hope that you may gain some perspective on where I stand and possibly as a lift-off for a hopefully enlightening discourse on the future of the Talon. This Code of Ethics recognizes the education of students as the preeminent priority of student media and identifies democracy as the ultimate classroom environment. As the Talon’s faculty adviser I for one am committed to working with all to refine the Talon’s bylaws, clarify its status, and flesh-out the many seemingly disparate expectations in the hope of finding the Talon’s foot-hold in this highly technology driven and values laden time. My hope is that we can all get (and keep) a grip!

Note: As this story goes to press, the movie Crash itself is facing conflict associated with legal fallout over proper producer’s credits.

CMA’s Code of Ethical Behavior

CMA’s Code of Ethical Behavior

The adviser is a journal list, educator and manager who is, above all, a role model. Because of this, the adviser must be beyond reproach with regard to personal and professional ethical behavior; should encourage the student media advised to formulate, adhere to and publicize an organizational code of ethics; and ensure that neither the medium, its staff nor the adviser enter into situations which would jeopardize the public’s trust in and reliance on the medium as a fair and balanced source of news and analysis.

The Adviser’s Professional Code

Freedom of expression and debate by means of a free and vigorous student

media are essential to the effectiveness of an educational community in a democratic society. This implies the obligation of the student media to provide a forum for the expression of opinion < not only those opinions differing from established university or administrative policy, but those at odds with the media staff beliefs or opinions as well.

Student media must be free from all forms of external interference designed to regulate its content, including confiscation of its products or broadcasts; suspension of publication or transmission; academic, personal or budgetary sanctions; arbitrary removal of staff members or faculty; or threats to the existence of student publications or broadcast outlets. In public

institutions, the law is quite clear on guaranteeing broad freedom of expression to the students. In private institutions, media advisers should aid in developing governing documents and working with administrative guidelines which foster a free and open atmosphere for students involved in campus media work, if such freedoms do not currently exist.

Students should be made mindful of their obligation to avoid real and apparent conflicts of interest. They must be held to clear local policies in that regard.

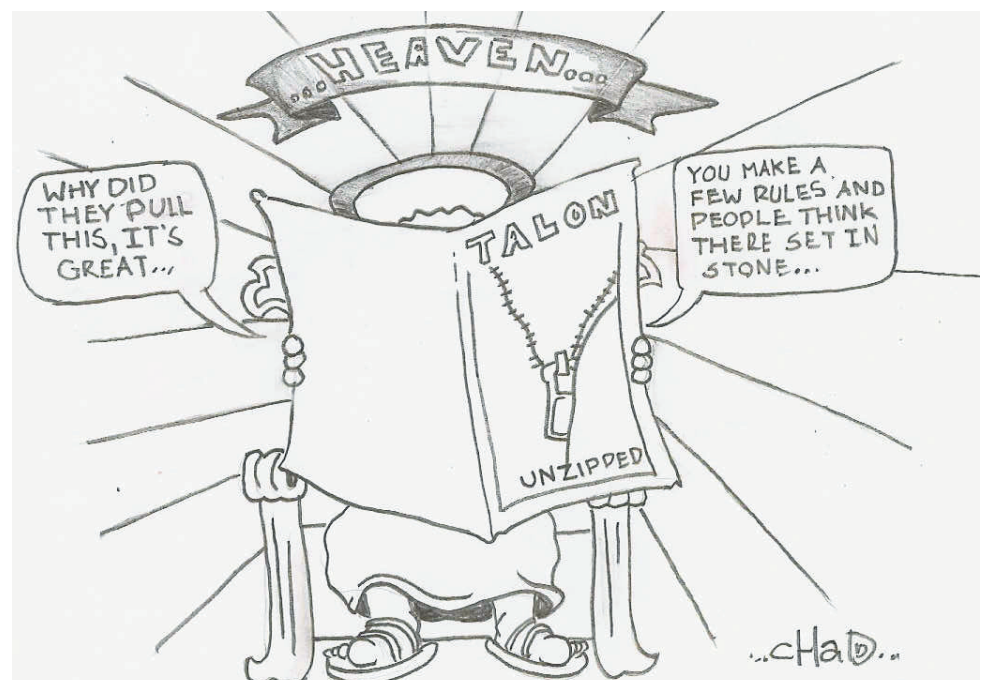
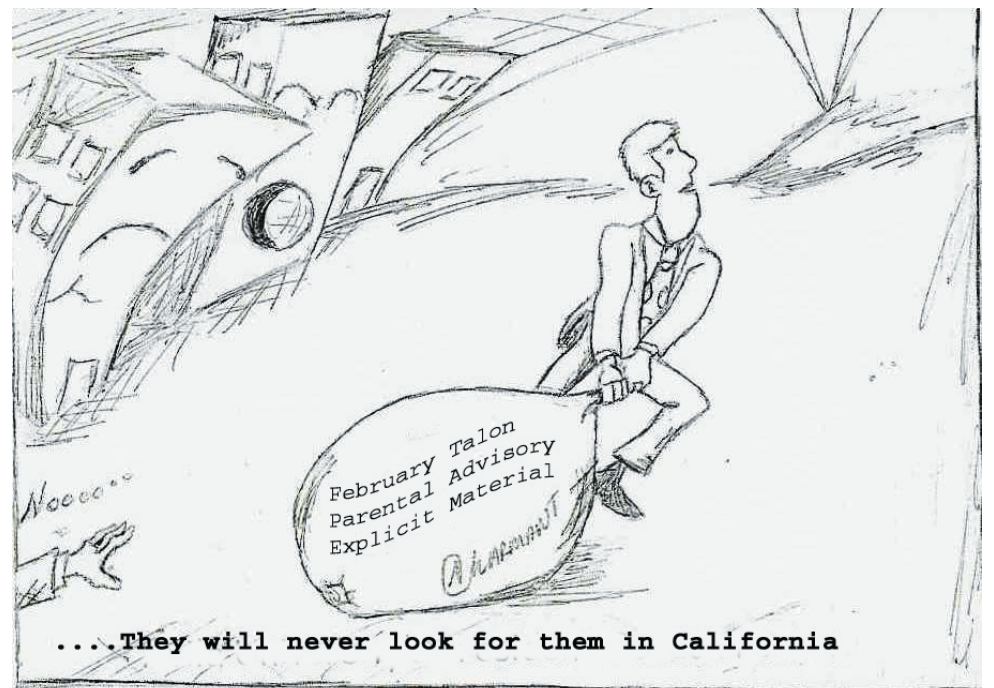
Advisers, in addition to adhering to their code of ethics, should encourage the media they advise have established and published codes that apply to the student staffs and conform to nationally established and

accepted journalistic norms regarding professional behavior, conflict of interest, acceptance of gifts and services, honesty and integrity.

Advisers, in these roles as professionals, must ensure that they have or gain the skills and education requisite to teach all aspects of the media they advise.

Revised in November 1992

*Full text of CMA Code can be found at www.collegemedia.org



Truely an artists rendering of Ben Digman, ladies, no phone calls please

